

unscientific. Conventional medicine has no test for chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, or depression. Doctors arrive at these diagnoses in one of two ways:

- **They look at a cluster of symptoms and assign it a label.** If the patient complains primarily of pain, he or she is likely to be diagnosed as having fibromyalgia. If fatigue is the primary complaint, the patient is diagnosed as having chronic fatigue syndrome. If the symptoms are mood-related, the patient is diagnosed as suffering from depression.
- **They rule out other possible diagnoses** and choose from among the remaining waste-basket diagnoses. For example, they may test for common infections, run an electrocardiogram, test blood sugar and iron levels, and when all the tests come back negative, conclude that the patient must have chronic fatigue syndrome or depression.

Comparing Symptoms

Chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, and depression have common symptoms, including the following:

- Brain fog (inability to focus or think clearly, impaired memory)
- Fatigue/weakness/exhaustion
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Irritability, sadness, and mood swings
- Poor sleep

Having common symptoms does not necessarily mean that chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, and depression are all the same, but it does suggest that they may share the same underlying cause.

The Missing Link: Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome

Another trait that chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, depression, and a host of other medical conditions have in common is inflammation. It is no surprise that Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS) shares many of the same symptoms:

- Cognitive difficulties (brain fog)
- Fatigue/weakness/exhaustion
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Mood swings
- Poor sleep

Chronic inflammation can cause or contribute to a host of other medical conditions, as well, including arthritis, asthma, allergies, sinusitis, and inflammatory bowel disease (such as colitis or Crohn's disease).

What Causes Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome?

Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS) is caused by exposure to biotoxins that pass from cell to cell, causing cell damage and eventually immune system dysfunction that leads to chronic systemic inflammation. Common sources of biotoxin exposure include the following:

- **Water damaged buildings (WDBs):** WDBs often contain a combination of mold (fungi), bacteria, biotoxins (produced by the mold and bacteria), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that trigger CIRS. By some estimates, 80 percent of all cases of CIRS are caused by exposure to WDBs.
- **Tick or spider bite:** Ticks carry certain infectious agents, such as *Borrelia burgdorferi* (which causes Lyme disease) and *Babesia microti* (which causes malaria like symptoms). Bites from recluse spiders may also cause CIRS.
- **Direct exposure to infected fish or water:** People who have eaten reef fish contaminated with the toxin *Ciguatera*, or

who have come into contact with water containing Pfiesteria, are at heightened risk of developing CIRS.

About 25 percent of the population is at a greater risk of developing Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome due to a genetic susceptibility. They carry specific HLA-DR genes that lack the mechanism for identifying and eliminating certain biotoxins from their bodies. In this segment of the population, the biotoxins quickly build up in their systems and remain long after exposure has ceased. The biotoxins continue to pass from one cell to the next, leaving a path of destruction.

Take Action

If you experience any of the symptoms described in this post, regardless of whether you have been diagnosed with mold toxicity, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, or something else entirely, or your doctor simply informs you that “your test results are normal,” get tested by a [doctor specializing in biotoxin illness and who understands CIRS](#). If levels of any biotoxins are abnormally high, take the next steps:

- Have your home and workplace tested and, if necessary, treated for mold. If you test positive for biotoxins, you’re picking them up from somewhere. Treat the source first.
- Get tested. Numerous tests are available to check for the presence of a chronic inflammatory response, and the presence of the HLA-DR gene. Follow the age-old wisdom: Test, don’t guess.
- Perform a medically supervised detox. Even if your body is equipped to eliminate biotoxins on its own, it may be overwhelmed at this point. A medically supervised detox provides your body with what it needs to more quickly, thoroughly, and safely remove these and other toxins.

The BioDesign Wellness Approach

Our approach to diagnosing and treating a patient always begins by listening to you and reviewing symptoms and previous treatments. We do not want to repeat what has already been tried and failed. Your timeline of events often provides the clues we need to begin our investigation of underlying causes.

The next step is to order targeted lab tests to gather the detailed information we need to make an accurate diagnosis. At this stage, we are looking for evidence to confirm or refute our suspicions and to tell us which treatment options will be most effective.

If we discover you have Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome, treatment includes one or more of the following:

- **Correcting your home or work environment, if necessary:** If the CIRS is caused by a WDB, the first course of action is to eliminate exposure.
- **Treating any infections:** Colonization of bacteria in the deep nasal passages can result in increased exposure to biotoxins. Bacteria protect themselves by creating a “bubble” or biofilm that shields them from antibiotics. Taking anti-fungals or antibiotics can often worsen the situation, as these biofilm dwellers can “sample” the medication and then share genetic information with each other to create resistance. We check you for biofilm-forming bacteria and provide appropriate treatment that avoids antibiotic resistance.
- **Medical detox:** Ridding the body of biotoxins prevents further damage to cells.
- **Anti-inflammation protocol:** Various treatments can be used to reduce inflammation, including an anti-inflammatory diet and supplements to restore healthy gut function.

Patients with chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, depression, and unexplained symptoms often struggle for years without an accurate diagnosis or effective treatment. Many times, they have been told by family members, doctors, or friends that it's all in their head. We are here to assure you that it's not. If you suffer from chronic fatigue, pain, brain fog, sinusitis, arthritis, or other persistent symptoms, something is definitely wrong, and effective treatments are within reach. At BioDesign Wellness Center, we remain at your side until we uncover the root cause(s) of your illness and address each and every symptom.

You deserve nothing less than to feel your best.

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